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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY





THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600 5 June 1966

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5 June 1966

HIGHLIGHTS

The powerful Buddhist Institute appeared to be in the throes of considerable internal political maneuverings this weekend as it awaited a Directorate announcement of the proposed government reorganization. The Buddhist leaders are continuing to insist on the removal of Ky and Thieu although it is not certain if they will have the will or strength to force the issue.

Allied forces report only light contact with enemy	
forces over the weekend (Paras. 1-2). Six American	S
killed in Viet Cong ambush (Para. 3). The Loc Ninh	
Airfield and nearby Special Forces camp were hit by	
a Viet Cong mortar attack killing three and woundin	g
21 (Para. 4).	\Box

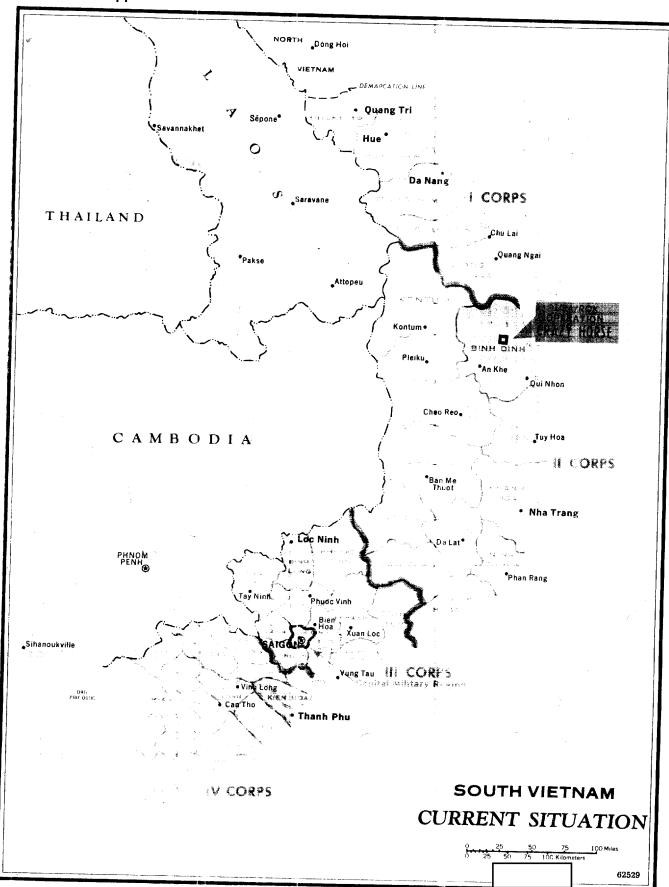
II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The Buddhist Institute in Saigon, while waiting for
the government to announce the Directorate reorganization, is wavering between a militant and moderate
line and attempted to solicit US support for the removal of Ky and Thieu (Paras. 1-3).

are aware that the government plans to maintain its supremacy, and further violence might ensue (Paras. 6-7). Three more Buddhists committed themselves to a fiery death over the weekend (Para. 8). Hue appears to be returning to normal, although most of the dissident students have not been disarmed by 1st Division troops (Paras. 9-11).

There is nothing of significance to report.

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* 25X1	V. Communist Political Developments: Communist commentary on the possibility of UN observers in the South Vietnamese elections is reported (Paras. 1-2). The head of the Liberation Front Office in	25X1 25X1
20/1	Algiers is leaving his post (Para. 8).	25X1
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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- 1. Although US forces are participating in 14 battalion-sized operations in South Vietnam, only light, sporadic contact with the enemy was reported over the weekend.
- 2. In the joint US South Korean Operation CRAZY HORSE, units of the Korean Tiger Division reported killing 67 Viet Cong in nine separate contacts with small enemy forces. Eight Koreans were killed and one wounded.
- 3. Six US Air Force men were killed in a Viet Cong ambush today (Vietnam time). The group was traveling in a truck seven miles north of the city of Quang Tri. US soldiers were sent to the area but found no trace of the Viet Cong.
- 4. During the evening of 4 June (Vietnam time), Viet Cong guerrillas fired about 60 rounds of 81-mm. mortar at the Loc Ninh Airfield and a nearby Special Forces camp in Binh Long Province. The area is about 70 miles north of Saigon, near the Cambodian border. Three persons were killed, including two Americans; and 21 wounded, including two Americans. Seven US helicopters were damaged in the 45-minute attack. US aircraft attacked the suspected Viet Cong position, but guerrilla losses were not known.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- 1. While awaiting a Directorate announcement of the proposed 6 June government reorganization, the Buddhist Institute seems to be in the throes of considerable internal political maneuverings in the absence of both Tam Chau, who has been out of Saigon after submitting his resignation as Institute chairman, and Thien Minh, who remains in the hospital after a grenade incident. Buddhist leaders are still insisting on the removal of Ky and Thieu but it is not certain at the present time if they have the will or the strength to force the issue.
- 2. In a realignment announced on 4 June, Thich Quang Lien was named acting chairman of the Vietnamese Buddhist Forces (VBF), the Institute's quasi-political party. Lien appears to keep a foot in both the moderate and militant Buddhist camps. Thich Man Giac, Thich Ho Giac, and layman Tran Quang Thuan were named 1st, 2nd, and 3rd deputy chairmen of the VBF, respectively. Man Giac will also fill in as acting head of the Buddhist Youth Forces in Thien Minh's absence. Ho Giac, after his resignation as co-president of the VBF, has been relegated to a lower position. A council of 12 monks who met at the Institute on 4 June decided against accepting the resignations of Tam Chau and Ho Giac; the latter have been unavailable for comment.
- 3. Lien met with a US Embassy officer on 4 and 5 June to solicit US support for the Buddhist position and feel out US thinking. He repeated earlier Institute statements that Ky and Thieu had agreed to resign and suggested that more trouble would occur if they failed to do so. Lien then offered the names of retired general Tran Van Don, Directorate secretary general Pham Xuan Chieu, and former deputy premier Nguyen Luu Vien as possible leaders of an interim government, insisting that the US could "influence" Ky and Thieu.

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Buddhist Fiery Suicides Increased

8. Three more self-immolations on 4 June marred negotiations. A nun burned herself to death on the Institute grounds in Saigon at 2.00 a.m. Vietnam time. Another nun in Nha Trang city killed herself at the same time in the same manner. In the northernmost province of Quang Tri at 4:30 a.m. Vietnam time, a novice monk repeated the earlier acts.

Situation in Hue

- 9. Hue appeared to be returning to normal on the weekend. The airport and government offices reopened. The consulate reported that four 1st Division infantry battalions and an armored cavalry regiment were in the city. General Lam, the new I Corps commander, reportedly visited Hue and gave his approval of events there to 1st Division officers.
- 10. The consul general, however, reported that General Nhuan is still partially under the influence of Tri Quang. Generals Dinh and Thi are playing a waiting game, and, since they have no command responsibilities, can be expected to side with the group that can best advance their personal interests. In spite of the superficial appearance of governmental control over the city, the consular officer expects considerable maneuvering by Tri Quang, Nhuan, and the rebel students before the situation can be called stable.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Hanoi, Peking, and the Liberation Front commentaries on the South Vietnamese Government's recent request for UN observers at its September elections has been predictably harsh and critical. A statement issued by the DRV Foreign Ministry on 4 June denounced the "farce elections" as an attempt to salvage the "puppet" administration and claimed that the call for UN observers was an effort to legalize the "puppet clique" by placing the UN lable on the elections. It reiterated Hanoi's position that the UN has "absolutely no competence in the Vietnam problem and that any decisions by it would be entirely null and void " A Liberation Front statement on 4 June pointed to the "ugly role of the UN as a puppet of the US" and condemned the elections as a "deceitful move by the Thieu-Ky clique to appease the urban people who are struggling for the overthrow of the puppet administration."
- 2. Peking's views on UN involvement were summed up in an NCNA broadcast on 3 June which reiterated Chinese assertion that the UN has no right what—soever to intervene in the Vietnam question. The broadcast claimed that any such intervention would be a prelude to further UN action in Vietnam and would allow the US "to make further use of the in—ternational body to serve its policy of aggression."

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Front	Official Leaves Post	
cast lead office ber or head opened been Asian placer view of enced Vo Correct of the control of	Huynh Van Tam, head of the Liberation Front's in Algiers, is leaving his post. Tam, a memf the NFLSV's central committee, has been the of the Front's Algerian office since it was din February 1963. He has also frequently the Viet Cong representative to various Afromeetings over the past three years. No rement for Tam has as yet been announced but in of the limited number of capable and experifront diplomats, there is a good chance that ng Trung, Tam's deputy since 1963, will take the post.	
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